

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly rewrite Claims 1-11 as follows, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121:

1. 1. [currently amended] A method for producing a heterologous protein which comprisescomprising

+A) culturing a *Corynebacterium glutamicum AJ12036 (FERM BP-734)* bacterium or mutant thereof ~~mutant coryneform bacterium~~ having a genetic expression construct wherein comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding a signal peptide region derived from a coryneform bacterium which is downstream of a promoter sequence which functions in a coryneform bacterium, and a nucleic acid sequence encoding a heterologous protein which is downstream of said nucleic acid sequence encoding said signal peptide region, said mutant coryneform bacterium having a capacity of secreting the heterologous protein at least 2 fold higher than the wild type *Corynebacterium glutamicum ATCC13869*, and

2) allowing said mutant coryneform bacterium to produce said heterologous protein, and

B3) recovering said heterologous protein,
~~wherein said bacterium or mutant thereof is able to secrete the heterologous protein at least 2-fold higher than *Corynebacterium glutamicum ATCC13869* having said genetic expression construct.~~

2. [cancelled]

3. [currently amended] The method of claim 1, wherein said mutant coryneform bacterium does not produce a cell surface protein and which is derived from *Corynebacterium glutamicum AJ12036 (FERM BP-734)*.

4. [previously presented] The method of claim 1, wherein said signal peptide region comprises a signal peptide of a cell surface protein from a coryneform bacterium.

5. [withdrawn] The method of claim 1, wherein said signal peptide region comprises a

signal peptide of a cell surface protein from *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

6. [withdrawn] The method of claim 1, wherein said signal peptide region comprises the amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:2.

7. [currently amended] The method of claim 1, wherein said signal peptide region comprises a signal peptide of a cell surface protein ~~derived~~ from *Corynebacterium ammoniagenes*.

8. [previously presented] The method of claim 7, wherein said signal peptide comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3.

9. [withdrawn] The method of claim 5, wherein said signal peptide comprises a sequence having at least one replacement, deletion, addition, or insertion of an amino acid, or a combination thereof in the amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:2.

10. [currently amended] The method of claim 1, wherein said culturing of said ~~mutant coryneform~~-bacterium or said mutant thereof is conducted in a medium containing at least 0.25 g/l (2.25mM) of calcium ion.

11. [currently amended] The method of claim 1, wherein said culturing of the~~said~~ mutant coryneform-bacterium or said mutant thereof is conducted by controlling the dissolved oxygen concentration at 3% or less.

12. [withdrawn] The method of claim 7, wherein said signal peptide comprises a sequence having at least one replacement, deletion, addition, or insertion of an amino acid, or a combination thereof in the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:3.